

To See the Truth

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Summary: On the night of his fifth birthday, Naruto is attacked by a mob of drunk men and is made blind in the scuffle. However, Sasuke Uchiha saves his life and he's brought to the Uchiha estate where it's decided he'll be adopted. After four years though, what happens when Itatchi murders the clan and decides to leave Naruto with the remaining eye of Shisui Uchiha. Time can only tell!

1. Chapter 1

****_Prologue:_****

****_October tenth, on a dark and stormy night; the wind howled, thunder rolled in the distance and flashes of lightning could be seen from afar. It was going to be a bad one and the village of Konohagakure had its citizens preparing for the worst. However, there still seemed to be the usual mob that lusted for vengeance against a beast that had nearly destroyed their entire village not but five years ago. The angry mob mostly consisted of drunken commoner men and drunken chunin's. They were a small group but they were just enough for their target. _****

****_Meanwhile, he knew they'd be coming and he knew they'd try and hurt him and if that wasn't bad enough, he was terrified of thunder and lightning. However, he had no choice but to leave the comfort of his home as he knew that they knew where he lived. So he ran, without any sign of a rain parka or anything, to hide somewhere safe until the end of his birthday was over. As he ran, he caught sight of the gathered mob and ducked quickly into an alleyway to avoid being spotted. He heard thunder in the distance and winced some in fright, shivering in the cold wind that blew. _****

****_""****_Tonight's the night," he heard one of the drunkards saying. "Tonight, we'll finish what the fourth started once and for all and be known as heroes of the village." Cheers rose from the man's drunken friends. Some were almost completely wasted while others**

hadn't even gotten started drinking towards that point but the bars had begun closing early because of the impending storm. The men began to move out, drawing ever closer to Naruto Uzumaki's hiding place. The five year old jinchuuriki was their target and they wouldn't let up until they'd found and pummeled him to death or finally sobered up enough to realize how pointless it all was to chase a five year old kid around when they knew where he would return to. _**

_Closer now, one of the men noticed Naruto's sandal sticking out from the alley and pointed towards it. _

"**_Hey, whose foot is that?" he questioned. Knowing that they would come over to check it out, Naruto burst out of the alleyway and ran at the full speed that five year old could muster down the street._**

"**_That's him, the demon!"_**

"**_There he goes," they shouted. Then a battle cry rose up and they charged forth. The only advantage they gave Naruto was the fact that they were drunk and couldn't all run or walk straight. However, the disadvantage lay with their blood lust, drunken stupors and longer legs. They chased him up and down, emptying streets as the storm got closer and as they ran, the rain started to fall. A few kunai and shuriken were loosed but because of their terrible aim, none hit the first round. _**

As this was going on, a young woman with long black hair and dark eyes was walking home with her own five year old son holding her hand. He had on a dark blue rain coat and was humming a happy tune to himself. The woman gazed down at her son with warm eyes. As the rain started she reached down and pulled up the boy's hood then tapped his nose teasingly with her index finger, a smile on her face.

"**_There now," she said. "You won't get all wet. We have just one more place to go before it closes to quickly grab some things and then we'll go home, alright Sasuke?" the boy nodded with a big goofy smile on his face. _**

"**_Mm hm!" he replied. "And I'll even help you carry it because I'm stronger now." His mother giggled. _**

"**_Are you now," she questioned ruffling the front of his hair some. "Well then, let's get to it so we don't keep you brother and father waiting alright?" Sasuke nodded happily and they continued walking until they came to a specific store front that was closing down. The shop keeper quickly flagged them in.
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"**_Mikoto," the keeper called. "Hurry, hurry; I want to close up before the storm gets really bad." Mikoto Uchiha nodded as she pulled Sasuke along into the front of the store. She quickly placed her order for the things she needed. While she did this, Sasuke swayed back and forth on his little feet, waiting for her to finish. That was when he heard the shouting coming from outside.
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**_Curious, he crept to the front of the store and looked out into the worsening wind and rain and just barely made out a little blonde

haired boy running very fast down the street without so much as a rain coat on. The shouts came from behind him and Sasuke turned to see a huge group of grown up men running down the street after him. As the blonde haired boy got closer to the front of the store, Sasuke watched as he slipped in the mud and tripped forward onto his front side. _**

_Sasuke then watched as the boy started trying to get up as fast as he could, continually slipping in the mud as the rain grew harder. As he kept trying, Sasuke caught something troubling about the boy on his face. It wasâ€¦fearâ€¦terror. The boy's eyes were wide and Sasuke could tell that he was scared and as he finally got a grip on the road and started running again, barely able to breathe, the mob of men had caught up and Sasuke could see in their hands, kunai and shuriken and they were yelling words of hatred and anger at the blonde who was running away. _

"**_Get back here you demon scum!" shouted one of the men. _**

"**_You won't escape!" cried another. _**

"**_We're going to kill you!" Sasuke froze as he watched them go by the shop. _**

_They're going toâ€¦kill him? __**Sasuke repeated in his head. Suddenly a sense of dread rose up in the pit of his stomach. At this point, his mother was paying for her things and as she turned around, she caught a glimpse of her son's blue rain coat disappearing into the rain.**_

"**_Sasuke!" she called slightly worried. "Wait, where are you going? Sasuke!" She grabbed her bags and followed him out into the rain, running after her youngest son. Meanwhile, Sasuke ran as fast as he could, following the sloppy footprints of the men. Finally he heard a high pitched scream coming from down another street. He turned and saw the backs of the men sticking out of an alleyway and they'd stopped. As Sasuke drew near, he found a pathway in between their legs and he crawled through unnoticed to the front of the crowd. Once there he beheld a horrible sight. _**

_The blonde haired kid, who'd been running from the men, was bent over in pain, holding onto his face with his forehead in the dirt as two of the drunkards were kicking his little body nonstop. They guffawed like fools. _

"**_Hah, that serves you right you demon! We're going to kill you but first we'll torture you some, how about that?" Sasuke stood there still in horror as he heard the cries and yelps from the blonde boy._**

"**_Stop it, stop it, stop it, stop it!" the blonde cried. He was bawling like a baby now, unable to control himself and Sasuke shook at the cruelty of the men surrounding him, his eyes wide with horror. A few men loosed some kunai and shuriken and they struck the blonde in his side and back and he screamed out in agony. _**

_Whatâ€¦what's going on?____**Sasuke wondered in terror. **_Why are they doing this to him? What's going onâ€¦whatâ€¦what do I do!?

__**As Sasuke had these thoughts he also noticed another drunk coming forth. He wielded a kunai and was grinning maliciously. Then he ran forth with an evil glint in his eye and kunai raised.**_

__****_Die!" With that one word it was decided. Sasuke's little body snapped into action as he balled his hands into fists and rushed forth, cutting the man off by head butting him in the stomach. The man had the wind knocked out of him and the others just stared in shock. Their yells died down and all that could be heard was the heavy panting from Sasuke and the whimpers from Naruto as he kept his head down in the mud and shivered in the cold. Finally one of the men broke from their stupor.**_

__****_Hey, why'd you do that brat?" he sneered at Sasuke. "Don't you know what that thing is? He's a demon so step away so we can kill it!" Sasuke wouldn't hear of it. Despite being scared out of his wits, he held his arms open wide and defensively and glared at the men. _**

__****_No!" he shouted defiantly. "You're nothing but a bunch of bullies picking on a little kid. Leave him alone!" He dug his feet more into the ground, his sandals squelching in the mud. Some of the men still drunk began to chuckle at his antics. One of them squatted down to his level, a smirk on his face. _**

__****_Listen kid, we're trying to do this village a favor. That kid behind you ain't no kid like you; he's an ugly monster underneath that exterior. Don't go throwing your life away to save him from what's been coming to him since the beginning." The other men chuckled again darkly. One threw a kunai at the one squatting and he caught it then held it out to Sasuke.**_

__****_Here, we'll let you share in the glory if you keep your mouth shut. All you have to do is stab him right between theâ€¦" the man didn't get the time to finish as Sasuke who'd been offended and angered by the man's attempt to add him to their murderous plan, spat in his face with a largely defiant look on his face. Some men laughed at their friend and others just whistled knowing the kid was in for it. _**

__****_Grr, you brat!" growled the man as he picked up Sasuke by the collar of his rain coat, his hood falling back at the same time. "Don't you understand, we're hunting this demon toâ€¦!"
_**

__****_If you're so interested in hunting demons then maybe you should go to hell," Sasuke spat out angrily, catching the mob by surprise. "I hear there are plenty down there!" The man's friends started snickering and the man holding Sasuke, refusing to be humiliated by a five year old in front of his friends, drew back his fist and punched Sasuke down into the ground next to Naruto who remained in his ball of pain, hiccupping and sobbing.
_**

__****_Fine then!" he shouted. "If you're going to defend him then you can join him!" His drunken friends seemed to mutually agree with him as they drew in closer with their snickers. However, Sasuke staggered back to his feet, ignoring the pain and focusing his newly developed rage upon the men. He glared at them stubbornly refusing to

back down as the men took up their weapons again and started to advance slowly. He heard a weak voice from behind._**

__****_Run away," it whimpered and he glanced over his shoulder at the boy, shaking from pain, fear and the cold. "Run away!" he said a little louder. Sasuke turned around again to face the mob still angry. _**

__****_Like hell I'm running away!" he stated. "I'm not just gonna leave you behind. My name's Sasuke Uchiha and I'll defend you with my life!" he yelled. Suddenly, he felt a tingling sensation in his eyes and the mob slowed some as they observed through the heavy rain that the five year old's eyes had turned red and in each one sat one tomoe that spun rapidly. _**

__****_Hey, isn't that the sharingan?" one man questioned uneasily. _**

__****_Yeah so what?" another asked. "He's just a kid. We can take him." The man who'd been spat on by Sasuke stepped forth a kunai in his hand._**

__****_If you don't want to die, out of the way. Otherwise, you'll die too," he growled. Sasuke was scared but despite the tears in his eyes, despite the crashing thunder overhead and the lightning that flashed, he stood his ground. The man scoffed. _**

__****_Fine!" He shouted as he raised his kunai, turning to his friends then back. "For the village!" The drunk men hooted and hollered as the kunai wielding man brought his kunai down and Sasuke Closed his eyes and turned away, waiting for the end. However, a loud thunk sounded and when Sasuke opened his eyes again he saw everyone turning towards the outermost part of the alleyway and the man in front of him was staggering a bit. There stood his mother, breathing heavily and dead serious after having thrown her sandal fairly hard at the kunai wielder's head. The man stood up again groaning then turned his drunken rage on the woman._**

__****_And what the hell do you think you're doing bitch!" he hollered. _**

__****_Yeah, do have a death wish?" asked another man with a sneer. However, Mikoto Uchiha's glare hardened and she looked like the one who would commit murder._**

__****_I swear by god that if you lay one finger on my son or his friend I won't hesitate in ripping off what makes you a man and shoving it down your screaming throats!" Sasuke flinched, having never heard his mother become so ruthless. The men burst out laughing though still somewhat nervous. _**

__****_Ohâ€¦and what makes you think you can stop us all when there are more of us than there are of you?" a man near the back sneered. The kunai wielder turned around grinning._**

__****_I mean it!" Mikoto hollered. "I won't hesitate whatsoever now go back to the slimy hole you crawled out of!" The kunai wielder let out a boisterous laugh with his company. _**

__****_And who's going to make us?" he chortled.

_**

"**_Why that would be me," spoke a chilling voice from behind. The man turned just in time to see an ANBU black ops mask covering the face of a man standing in front of the boys. Sasuke looked up amazed. Meanwhile, the drunks were beginning to shake as two more ANBU appeared on the scene. The first one approached the man wielding the kunai and placed a hand on his shoulder. _**

"**_Sorry but I'm afraid you're all under arrest," the ANBU stated. The man shrugged him off his shoulder and stepped back. _**

"**_No, no way!" he exclaimed. "You ANBU are crazy if you think we're just going to let that demon run around anymore. If we don't get him this year, he'll terrorize the village again andâ€¦" the ANBU appeared in a flash behind the man again and knocked him out with one hand chop to the back of the neck. The man crumpled to the ground instantly and the others of the mob knew the jig was up. They threw down their weapons and put their hands up in surrender. _**

"**_That's better," spoke an ANBU with a cat mask. The two other ANBU began to escort the drunken citizens and the few chunin out of the alleyway and down the street towards the police station. The first ANBU who'd arrived remained; picking up the sandal Mikoto had thrown and handed it to her as she ran into the alleyway to hold her son in her arms. _**

"**_Here mother," the ANBU said softly. "Your feet will get cold." Mikoto smiled as she pulled her son into a hug and glanced up at her eldest behind the mask. He removed the mask for a moment and Sasuke's face though contorting in some pain seemed surprised. _**

"**_Itachi!" he exclaimed. "You saved us." Itachi nodded. _**

"**_Yes but I believe it was you who saved that boy there," Itachi stated as he pointed to the still shaking form of Naruto, now sitting up slightly, still covering his face. A roll of thunder and a lightning flash made everyone but Itachi flinch. He looked up towards the sky then back at his mother. _**

"**_If I were you, I'd hurry home mother. This storm is supposed to get really bad tonight." Mikoto nodded. _**

"**_Yes of course, I know." Sasuke glanced at the blonde who was trying to stand up. He yelped as Sasuke flinched at the next lightning flash and thunder roll. Sasuke turned to his mother. _**

"**_Mother," he started, brow furrowed. "Why were those mean men chasing that boy over there? Did he do something wrong? I don't get it. They said they wanted to kill him." Mikoto looked to where her son had indicated, her heart stopping in her chest as she saw the child, shaking in the cold. _**

"**_That'sâ€¦" she started but she didn't quite finish. Sasuke

became even more confused. Some tears formed in his mother's eyes and he became worried. She brought a hand to her mouth. She watched the boy jump and yelp again then whimper, scared of the crashing thunder. She let Sasuke go from her grip and approached the young boy who was still covering his face, this time with his right arm._**

"**_Naruto," she spoke softly, getting the blonde's attention. However, upon hearing his name and feeling an approaching figure nearby he leapt back against the wall, the kunai that stuck out of him sinking deeper within his flesh. _**

"**_Leave me alone!" he cried out in terror. Mikoto was taken aback by the sudden fear rising in his voice. However, she recovered and tried to calm him down._**

"**_Naruto listenâ€|" she tried. Naruto started batting away at the air screaming his head off. _**

"**_No, get away, get away, get away from me! Leave me alone!" _**

"**_Naruto I'm not going toâ€|" Mikoto tried again but this time Naruto stood and ran right past her still mortally terrified. Sasuke watched wondering what was going on with the blonde and why he was so scared. _**

"**_I said stay away!" he screamed "Just leave me alone! I'm not a demonâ€|Iâ€|I didn't do anything!" he howled louder, his crying becoming frantic. It scared Sasuke the way he was yelling at his mother in fear but even more so, it made Sasuke want to cry as well for the boy's sake. Naruto kept running, going crooked and hitting the wall, face first. He fell again, crying louder. He tried to get up and run again but Mikoto wouldn't let him._**

"**_Oh no you don't!" she said as she caught Naruto by the wrist. This terrified Naruto even more and he thrashed and twisted against her firm grip. _**

"**_No, no, no don't kill me!" he wailed. "I don't wanna die!" Mikoto then proceeded to tug him towards her all the while he kept thrashing and thrashing. He cried in fright louder than he'd ever cried before trying to break free. _**

"**_Stop it!" Mikoto barked. "I'm not going toâ€|" she was interrupted as the five year old delivered a hard punch to her jaw. Sasuke stared in surprised then got angry. He got up and walked over to the two, his tiny fist coming down hard on Naruto's head only causing him to wail more._**

"**_Sasuke!" Mikoto exclaimed incredulous but Sasuke proceeded to yell above the boy's wailing. _**

"**_You idiot, don't hurt my mom. She's trying to help you but you're not even letting her. We're not going to hurt you!" Naruto just kept blubbering, his arm still covering his face. Sasuke huffed and sat down beside them and started pulling kunai and shuriken from Naruto's body. Mikoto helped and they threw the horrible weapons away. Then Mikoto proceeded to pull the boy into a warm motherly hug, surprising him enough for a lapse in his crying. Mikoto took this as

her chance. _**

_ _**_Naruto sweetie, listen to me okay," she coaxed. She began to rub his wet back. "My name is Mikoto Uchiha and my two sons Itachi and Sasuke just helped save you from those mean old men. We don't want to hurt you do you understand?" Regardless of her words, Naruto still shuddered. Sasuke then caught sight of something._**

_ _**_Hey, what happened to your face?" he questioned. Mikoto picking up on her son's words held Naruto back some and saw that his arm still covered his faceâ€|no more like his eyes. She stroked the boy's hair._**

_ _**_Narutoâ€|" she spoke cautiously. "Sweetieâ€|what did those men do to you?" She moved to take his arm down and he flinched. Sasuke found himself putting a hand on the kid's shoulder making him flinch again._**

_ _**_It's okay. Just take it easy. Mom just wants to see what happened and if those meanies did anything to hurt you, my dad's in charge of the police so he'll be able to make them pay. Oh yeah," at this Sasuke lowered his voice to a whisper. "And if you're good I'll let you have some of my secret stash of candies." Mikoto raised an inquiring eyebrow. _**

_ _**_What's this I hear about secret candy?" Sasuke froze turning to her with an obviously guilty grin._**

_ _**_Oh nothing really," Sasuke spoke with innocence then turned back to Naruto. "C'mon, you can trust us," he reassured. Sasuke then reached up and gently coaxed Naruto's arm away from his eyes. When they could see, Mikoto gasped in horrid shock, causing Naruto to bring his arm again and cringe. Tears filled Mikoto's eyes._**

_ _**_Oh those horrible, horrible men!" she exclaimed. She gently pulled Naruto closer to her and held him tight. Then Itachi came up._**

_ _**_Mother," he said insistently but with calm in his voice. "Please, I ask that you take shelter as fast as possible. I sense this storm is going to get worse. I'll take Naruto to the hospital." Mikoto tightened her grip on Naruto._**

_ _**_No Itachi, it's fine," she stated strongly as she stood up. She lifted Naruto with her. "The compound's nearby so we'll run there. I won't hand him over to strangers now. I'm an ex medic remember?" Itachi froze, not sure what to do. He too had seen the ugly gash across Naruto's face that now made him blind. He was considering telling his mother that he really needed a hospital but Sasuke smiled up at him._**

_ _**_It's okay big brotherâ€|we'll look after him." He beamed at Itachi, chasing away the elder brother's doubts._**

_ _**_Very well," he said, making a hand sign and creating a shadow clone beside him. "Then I will at least aide you in finding your way and carrying your bags. Let's go." Mikoto nodded. She shifted Naruto from hip to hip, shirking off her rain coat and

wrapping him inside. She placed him on her right shoulder and the still surprised boy could only cling on as she grabbed Sasuke's hand and they started running through the downpour with the shadow clone.

_**

They ran all the way to the nearby Uchiha compound and eventually burst through the door upon the scene of a worried Aunt and Uncle as well as Fugaku, Sasuke's father. They were out of breath and soaking wet.

_"**_Mikoto where have you been this whole time?" questioned the woman who made it to the door first. "And what on earth are you doing with your raincoat like that?" Mikoto slowly calmed her panting.

_**

_"**_I was trying to keep him dry," she said plainly getting a raised eyebrow from her husband as he approached her._**

_"**_Who?" he pondered. His wife stood up straighter and the rain coat fell backwards from the boy's head revealing ridiculously blonde hair and cheeks that had whisker markings, three on either one. A gasp escaped the Aunt's throat._**

_"**_But that'sâ€|he'sâ€|" Fugaku quickly shot her a glare accompanied by her husband. Their actions caused Sasuke to frown. Fugaku stared down at the boy, showing no emotion whatsoever.

_**

_"**_What could've possessed youâ€|to bring him here?" Fugaku wondered in a whisper. His wife only turned an icy glare upon him.

_**

_"**_He was being chased by an angry mob of drunks," she stated firmly. "Sasuke saved his life and Itachi and I helped out too. Now I know what all of the villagers say and think and honestly I couldn't care less or give a damn. This boy is hurt Fugaku and he needs comfort and attention!"_**

_"**_But here of all places, why not take him to the hospital," the Uncle protested. Itachi's shadow clone cleared its voice.

_**

_"**_Excuse me Uncle but I do believe the storm outside has gotten worse. There would've been no way of getting him there in time before the gale forces started and we ANBU are on orders to make sure every civilian is safe inside the closest residence they can find. Naruto might only be a boy but he is still a civilian so I believe that does fall within my jurisdiction." The Uncle huffed annoyed and crossing his arms over his chest. _**

_"**_Alright, alright ya don't have to get all authoritative on me. It's bad enough that your father pushes me around." Itachi gave something similar to an almost apologetic smile._**

_"**_Sorry Uncle but it is my duty after all," he replied._**

_"**_Yeah, yeah," he said waving it off. Mikoto by this time had taken off her sandals and was hurrying into the house.

_**

"**_Uruchi," Mikoto barked. "I need your help tending to this boy's injuries. Could you please get me my old medical supplies from my room? They should be stored underneath a floor tile in a big box." Uruchi, Sasuke's Aunt was caught off guard by the demand as she knew what lay inside the child. However, seeing him in Mikoto's arms and breathing heavily, indicating the rise of a fever, she couldn't help but wonder what if it had been Sasuke. She sighed and nodded._**

"**_Very well, I'll retrieve them," she replied as she slunk away to Mikoto and Fugaku's room. Fugaku followed his wife with the boy and Sasuke into the living room while Itachi's shadow clone entered the kitchen and began to unpack the somewhat soaked groceries. Mikoto laid Naruto out on the couch and readied herself. Then calling up the old times of being a medical ninja she started to analyze Naruto's damaged eyes to see what she could do. Fugaku leaned over, his arms crossed over his chest._**

"**_He looks pretty banged up," was all he could manage to say after a while. Mikoto gave a weak smile._**

"**_Yes he is," she replied. "You should've seen it though, it was awful what those men did to him. I didn't see all of it but I did get there in time to distract them from hurting Sasuke." Fugaku raised an eyebrow and looked down at his youngest son as he sat eagerly waiting by the boy's side. He sighed and sat down on a nearby futon cushion._**

"**_Sasuke," he started, calling the boy's attention. "Tell me, what all did they do to Naruto?" he questioned. Sasuke seemed baffled as to why his father was asking him a question but eventually supplied an answer. _**

"**_Well first I saw him running away from them and I got curious so I followed. Then I heard him scream from an alleyway and managed to get in and they were there kicking him and throwing kunai and shuriken and even yelling at him, calling him names like demon and they said they would kill him. One almost did but I stopped him but then he told me I could help them kill him. I got angry so I spat in his face and told him that if he wanted to hunt demons so bad then he could go to hell because that's where they live!" Teyaki, the uncle who was standing in the doorway snorted at this and started laughing some._**

"**_Well now that's telling em isn't it Sasuke?" he guffawed. Mikoto didn't look pleased as she didn't approve of her son using such behavior no matter how much the men probably deserved it. She however didn't say anything as she was currently focusing on Naruto._**

"**_Anyway then they tried to kill me too but mom threw her shoe at his head and then Itachi and the ANBU appeared to help. He knocked out one man and arrested the others." Fugaku took his son's story into thought then finally nodded and sighed._**

"**_Well this should prove interesting to say the least when it comes time to give lord third the report now won't it?"_**

__****_Please father," Itachi stated, coming into the room. "Allow me to make the report. You're still getting over a bad case of the flu remember. I'll take care of it." Fugaku smiled, sighing and letting his true age ring out in his voice. _**

__****_Thank you Itachi," he finally responded. He then looked up at his wife. "So what injuries did he sustain?" _**

__****_Just some cuts and bruises from being beaten and hit by sharp weapons. Oh and one of the assholes destroyed his eyes with a kunai no doubt. He's already lost so much blood; I'm surprised he's even still conscious." _**

__****_Language Mikoto, language," scolded Uruchi as she reentered the living room with the medical kit. "Don't be swearing in front of the kids." Mikoto laughed apologetically._**

__****_Sorry, it's just they made me so made ya know," Teyaki chuckled._**

__****_Ya know huh? You sound just like Kushina when you talk like that," he laughed. Mikoto only nodded solemnly remembering her dear old friend who'd died the same day she'd given birth to the very child now in her care. When she'd seen his hair and whisker marks she'd known right away. _**

__****_Who's Kushina?" wondered Sasuke curiously. Mikoto beamed down at him._**

__****_A very old friend of mine who died a long time ago," she replied. _**

__****_Oh," Sasuke nodded then turned back to Naruto's form lying on the sofa. After a while more of Mikoto's scanning a frown developed on her face. Fugaku noticed._**

__****_What's wrong Mikoto?" Mikoto huffed, blowing a strand of her black hair out of her eyes._**

__****_I'm not sure," she admitted. "The other injuries seem to be healing fine and think I know why but his eyesâ€|whatever's healing his other wounds isn't healing his eyes and even though I'm trying I can't seem to figure out what's going on here." Fugaku came over to examine him more thoroughly himself. He knelt down beside his wife and gently pried open an eyelid but it still made the boy whimper. Deciding to play her part, Uruchi despite her better judgement, bent down grasping the boy's hand and began rubbing it._**

__****_Shhh," she shushed soothingly. "None of that now. We need to see how bad it is so we can help. Just try to relax; it'll all be over soon." _**

__****_That's right Naruto," Sasuke piped in using Naruto's name after having picked it up from everyone else. "Soon you're gonna be all better, just wait and see!" he beamed. Naruto sniffled._**

__****_Butâ€|but I can't see," he stammered pathetically. Itachi

now stood over him with his mother and father, activating his sharingan to see if he could find any starting points. He sighed heavily. _**

"**_I doubt we'll be able to do him any good right now," he implied regretfully. "I don't think we'll be able to figure this out without a fully trained medic although mother's skills are somewhat useful. He needs to see a doctor but it seems the storm is pickingâ€|" there was an incredibly loud sound of thunder that interrupted him causing some in the room to jump some more than others. Naruto yelped and then started crying again but not as loud as before. Meanwhile Sasuke had all but leapt into his Aunt's embrace, scared out of his wits. _**

"**_Up," Itachi finished with a mutter. There was silence as the rain picked up outside along with the howling wind. A shaking Sasuke peeked back out of his Aunt's stomach to see Naruto shaking uncontrollably. _**

"**_That was a big one huh?" he asked no one in particular. _**

"**_Sure was," his Aunt agreed. "It near scared the buhjeebers outta me." Sasuke laughed lightly at this, pulling himself from within her embrace and scooting closer to Naruto's head. _**

"**_Don't you think it was a really loud one Naruto?" Sasuke asked trying to make conversation with the frightened blonde. Naruto slowly nodded._**

"**_Yeah," he agreed in a tiny voice. "I don't like it." Sasuke beamed with a goofy grin that Naruto couldn't see. _**

"**_Yeah, me either," he replied. Naruto gave a faint smile. Meanwhile Fugaku turned to his eldest._**

"**_Itachi, were you going to say anything else about Naruto's eyes?" he queried. Itachi was pulled from his reverie and nodded._**

"**_Yes, I was going to say that mother was right that Naruto got cut but I personally don't believe that it was by an ordinary kunai. Noâ€|I believe it was done by someone wielding a chakra blade which indicates that there were definitely some chunin among them, maybe even a jonin. Perhaps that's what' messing up the healing process. There could be miniscule residual amounts of chakra and metal from the blade. Of course, I'm no expert at looking into things like that but maybe one of the Hyuga could use their byakugan and take a look after the storm. For now the best we can do is bandage him up." _**

_Fugaku nodded, looking to his wife. She too nodded then proceeded to stand and lift Naruto from the couch. _

"**_Alrightâ€|we're going to bandage your eyes for the time being Naruto but first we're going to give you a bath and get you all cleaned up." Naruto could only nod as he was lifted and once again

his cheek was resting on the woman's shoulder. _**_Is this what it's like? __**He wondered to himself. **__To be held by a mother? It's so warm.____**He rested his head as she carried him and he heard her voice as she called back to her youngest son.**_

__****_You too Sasuke. You're absolutely filthy," she stated. Sasuke then proceeded to sniff himself and look back at his mother embarrassed. _**

__****_It's not that bad," he complained. However, his mother's piercing glare was all he needed to know that he should probably listen. He got up and ran after her and Naruto. _**

_Not too soon afterwards, both Sasuke and Naruto found themselves in the warm waters of the bath tub. Sasuke was having fun playing with some of his bath toys while Naruto just sat in the water quietly as Mikoto hummed and washed his hair. His eyelids remained closed over his dead eyes and all he could hear next to him was Sasuke having a ball and splashing around with his toy fish. Eventually though it was his turn to have his hair washed and he grumbled through the entire process. _

_Naruto just sat smiling faintly as he thought to himself. __Is this what it's likeâ€¦to have a brother? __**He wondered. Finally Mikoto finished washing their hair and then began scrubbing their bodies with soap and a wet cloth until they were clean to her liking. Then it was time for towels and drying off. As soon as they were dried, Mikoto went about placing Naruto on the counter and using her medic kit, which had been brought in by Uruchi again; to the best of her abilities to ease any pain and eventually wrapped some bandages around his head. Then she led him and Sasuke into Sasuke's room where Sasuke found him a pair of clean pajamas.**_

__****_Here, these are mine but you can wear them," Sasuke said as he held out the folded clothes to his mother since Naruto couldn't see them. Mikoto smiled at her son's kindness._**

__****_Thank you Sasuke, now you go get dressed too," she said warmly. Sasuke nodded smiling and went to pull out another pair of pajamas and underwear for himself. Mikoto meanwhile aided Naruto in putting on the pajamas he'd been given and soon both were dressed for bed. Naruto felt awkward._**

__****_Are you sure you want me to stay. I don't live hereâ€¦|Iâ€¦|_**

__****_Don't be so foolish," Mikoto teased, tugging playfully on his nose. "Of course you're staying. After everything that's happened I'm not about to throw you out in the rain. In fact, I don't think you should be living all by yourself at your age. Honestly I don't know what the third hokage was thinking." Naruto became surprised as he was once again scooped up into Mikoto's arms._**

__****_Sasuke, if you're done why don't we all get a nice bedtime snack?" _**

__****_Okay!" replied the five year old enthusiastically. Their bedtime snack consisted of some cookies made by Mikoto the other day and some milk to wash it all down with. Mikoto had to help Naruto

find his way to the cookie plate but once the boy had figured it out, he only needed to repeat the motion of reaching, grabbing and then munching as he brought the cookie up to his mouth. Eventually, both boys had their fill and Mikoto led them both back to Sasuke's room.

_**

"**_I'm sorry but we don't have much room so you'll get to sleep in Sasuke's room with him tonight? Is that alright?" she asked. Naruto nodded still not knowing just who this Sasuke kid was who'd saved him earlier and unsure of how to express his gratitude.

_**

_Since both boys were small, they could both fit in the same bed where Mikoto placed a rolled up blanket in between the two so they wouldn't roll on top of each other. Then as the winds howled outside and the thunder continued to crash causing Naruto to start sniveling again, Mikoto sat at the edge of the bed and started reading them a bed time story, one of Sasuke's favourites about a ninja hero who travelled to a land of giants on a mission to bring back a golden swan. Naruto found that he liked it a lot. _

Then Mikoto declared lights out and kissed them both on the forehead goodnight. By this time, the storm outside had begun to settle down but only slightly. The thunder still sounded though softer than before. The two lay there in silence for a while, the new sounds and smells confusing Naruto greatly. He was definitely not in his little apartment but in a wayâ€|he felt like he was at home. Before he could drift off though, a curious Sasuke poked him lightly in the arm.

"**_Hey, are you still awake?" he whispered. Naruto nodded slowly then decided to speak his answer._**

"**_Yeah," he whispered back. He waited for a while until the boy asked him another question._**

"**_Soâ€|why were they chasing you? Did you do something that made them mad?" Naruto clenched his fist._**

"**_No!" he snapped, surprising Sasuke. "I never did anything to them butâ€|but they always come especially todayâ€|it's my birthday!" _**

"**_Oh wellâ€|happy birthday. How old are you?"
_**

"**_Five," came the reply. _**

"**_Cool, I'm five too," Sasuke declared. "Soâ€|why do they come anyway? Is it something your mommy or daddy did or do they just not like you for some stupid reason. If so then why wouldn't your mommy and daddy stop them?" Sasuke waited for an answer but only heard sniffing in the dark. "Hey are you crying again?" he wondered.
_**

"**_Iâ€|I don't know why," Naruto spluttered thorough tears. "They just hate me; everybody in the village hates me. They look at me as if I'm some sort of monster that doesn't deserve to live and they kick me out of places because they don't want me around. Then they come on my birthday in groups trying to kill me or just beat me

up. Not even do the other kids like me._**

__****_Iâ€|I don't have any friends orâ€|or parents. My mommy and daddy died a long time agoâ€|at leastâ€|that's what the hokage said. They died defending the village from that demon fox that attacked a long time ago. I'm an orphan but they kicked me out of the orphanage two months ago so the hokage gave me an apartment. But they know where it is so they attack there tooâ€|" Naruto's voice caught in his throat as the thoughts kept coming to him and began he to sob quietly into the pillow._**

__****_I'mâ€|I'm all alone!" he cried as he shuddered. Sasuke took his story with shock. How could anybody be so hated for something they didn't do or didn't know about? How could an orphanage kick out a kid about his age and tell him to fend for himself? How could the village he lived in have people so heartless and cruel? He just couldn't understand. _**

_I can't imagine being without mother, father and big brother____**Sasuke thought to himself. **_It must be scary having to live in fear of everyone around him, being thrown around like a rag doll because of something he doesn't know about. And what about nightmares? If no one was thereâ€|did he just cry himself back to sleep or not sleep at all? What all does he eat? No one's there to make his food or wash him or do anything. He probably has to do it all for himself. That kind of lifeâ€|it sounds sad andâ€|scary.

—

Naruto continued sniffing on his side of the divider. Thinking it over in his head, Sasuke lifted the divider blanket and put it behind him. Then doing the only thing he felt would stop Naruto's crying, he scooted over some and hugged him shocking the five year old blonde with the contact. Naruto was too stunned to react.

__****_Mom always says that hugs are the best cure for loneliness and pain but that they should only be given to family or friends. Narutoâ€|I want to be your friend okay?" Naruto not knowing what else to do took a while to register those words before shuddering and weeping some more, however much it hurt his eyes. He turned towards where the warmth was coming from and shuddered with sobs again as he said,_**

__****_Tha-ank youâ€|Sasuke," he blubbered. Sasuke beamed._**

__****_It's okay, your welcome. Just try to get some sleep now okay?" Naruto shuddered again and nodded. The two boys remained in their hold for a long time with Sasuke hugging Naruto and Naruto snuggling down into the warmth of the hug and the covers. Eventually, they fell asleep side by side and that night, for the first time in a while, Naruto Uzumaki didn't have a single nightmare._**

2. Chapter 1 (Blind but Okay)

Chapter 1

(Blind but Okay)

A door slid open within the Uchiha compound and an excited Sasuke

tugged his newest brother through the door. He pointed even though he knew he couldn't see and brought him closer to what he was trying to show him.

"And this is our dining room where we eat and there's the kitchen over there. This is our table, it's really smooth," he exclaimed quickly. Sasuke led Naruto over to where the table was and got him to sit down on a cushion to feel the table top. It was a new thing for Naruto, to feel around for everything and try to catalog it to memory. Now that he no longer had his eyesight, he had to rely on his other senses.

When Naruto was done feeling the table top Sasuke once again tugged on his arm getting him to his feet so he could take him around to feel all of the cupboards with his hands. He felt everything from the wooden exterior to the metallic handles and then his hand grasped something softer and less solid.

"That's mom's dishtowel," Sasuke explained. "It sure is soft isn't it? It's hanging on the handle to the oven door and above that is the stove. I wouldn't touch that though since it gets really hot when it's on. I did that once and it really hurt." Sasuke then led Naruto towards another room of the house right past his Aunt Uruchi as she was entering the front door to drop off some baked goods. She smiled at the little five year olds both of which now were her nephews.

"Showing Naruto the house are we?" she asked Sasuke as he went by towing Naruto behind. Sasuke turned towards his Aunt with a huge grin on his face.

"Yep, we're going to the TV room next and then outside!" Sasuke exclaimed.

"Ah, I see," His Aunt smiled then turned her gaze on Naruto. "And what about you Naruto, are you getting a good feel of the place or is Sasuke just towing you from place to place after you've poked it with your finger?" she chuckled as the young Uchiha made a pouty face.

"Aunty, no fair," he whined. Meanwhile Naruto just blushed some, somewhat nervous in the woman's presence.

"N-no, Iâ€|I'm getting a good feelâ€|r-really," he stammered. Uruchi sighed and chuckled to herself, ruffling the boy's hair as she went to drop off her delivery in the kitchen, handing both Naruto and Sasuke a cookie from the basket she was carrying. Each took it gratefully and said thanks; Naruto's barely making it through his mouth as Sasuke began towing him in a different direction. Uruchi watched them go, sighing heavily and wondering to herself why she'd been so foolish to think of Naruto as the nine tailed fox before.

After his experience, Naruto had slept soundly with Sasuke and Mikoto had come in, in the morning to find them cuddled up with other. She found it cute and while no one was looking snapped a picture for the family photo album. Next it'd been a fairly busy morning as Mikoto got the boys ready to take Naruto to the hospital. There, Naruto underwent several treatments with the third hokage dropping by to make sure the boy was okay.

During that time, Mikoto had let Hiruzen Sarutobi have a piece of her mind about what she was feeling and the unfortunate hokage had to listen to it as eyes from the nurses and some of the patients and visitors turned on him. Needless to say, she'd made up her mind. She was going to fight for the right for her and Fugaku to adopt Naruto Uzumaki. At that precise moment, not only had Sasuke gotten pumped up at the thought of having a new brother in the family but the nurses and doctors had also come forth with some fairly heavy news.

Naruto's eyes couldn't be saved and were forever damaged. Mikoto had wondered to herself why the fox spirit inside of him hadn't decided to heal them but had to quickly push it from her mind as she and everyone had to accept that Naruto would forever be blind. She'd had to go into his room after they'd told him the news, the third hokage with her and by that time, her husband too who'd felt well enough to come in; and comfort the poor boy as he cried at losing his sight, the thought scaring him something awful. Luckily though, Sasuke had been able somewhat cheer him up with the news that his mother was going to adopt him into their family so he wouldn't be alone anymore.

Of course after this, Mikoto had begun her long battle, first against her husband.

"Mikoto, what are you thinking!" Fugaku had barked. "We can't take that boy in. You know what's inside of him and though I know he's not the beast, it only further strengthens the village's distrust of the Uchiha." Mikoto had been furious.

"Oh you and your clan!" she'd shot back. "Don't go preaching to me what's going on, I already know, hell even Itachi knows! But tell me are we truly such a cursed clan that we're just going to concern ourselves with our silly title only serving a name that we can change for the better if we only just stopped being so god damned up tight?!"

"Mikoto," Fugaku had started but his wife wasn't about to be cut off.

"No! Don't you Mikoto me! You saw what those brutes did to Naruto, they took his eyes! How's he supposed to get by now when he lives alone and can barely defend himself against a drunken army?!"

"The hokage would station body guards after something like that or try and find another family who'd be willing enough to care for him."

"And who would?" she'd said flaring up again. "You know full well as I do that there's nobody besides the hokage and a couple of select shinobi who would take care of him but would they actually know anything about raising a child? He doesn't need body guards Fugaku he needs love and proper care, something others in this village refuse to give him. If we don't reach out to him now, it'll be too late."

"Mikoto, it's not just about that, you know that the council would never allow our clan to adopt the boy after what happened five years ago. We're still under suspicion though I don't doubt that it was an

Uchiha controlling that beast, we need to find out who it was and putting the boy in that kind of danger is unnecessary. Look I want to protect him as much as you do, after all Minato and Kushina were my friends too." Mikoto had looked away.

"Fugakuâ€¦if we start throwing excuses like that around then it's no better than if we had disregarded Minato's legacy to his face. I know the risks butâ€¦I also know that if we don't take them then not only do we corrupt that legacy but we corrupt our own future as wellâ€¦worse than it already is." There had been a long silence then and it became unsettling. Then finally Fugaku had pinched the bridge of his nose.

"You really won't be swayed will you?" he'd questioned. She had shaken her head in response. He sighed heavily. "Very wellâ€¦we will face the council together and fight for the right for Naruto to be our son."

"Fugaku, do you really mean it?" Fugaku had given his wife a soft smile indicating a yes.

"I have to pay back Minato for saving my life all those years ago. Besides, Sasuke seems to like him and even Itachi seems to as well. Plus I have to admitâ€¦in the one day he's been hereâ€¦he's kind of grown on me." Mikoto had smiled and Fugaku had taken her and this was how they'd entered the council room much later and their battle began.

Of course the council had been against the Uchiha adopting the Jinchuuriki and their reasoning's were like and much more convincing than Fugaku's argument had been. However the couple wouldn't be swayed and only the third hokage seemed to want to take their side. Well after a long and hefty battle, they'd finally won and on the same day had adopted Naruto Uzumaki into their little family.

Sasuke had been ecstatic with the news and Naruto had been beyond shocked. The youngest Uchiha had then proceeded in showing Naruto around the house just like they were doing now so that Naruto could become familiar with the environment. Uruchi remembered that while Fugaku and Mikoto had been fighting the council, she'd had to watch over the boys whenever Itachi was too busy to do so and she too had to admit that the little blonde had grown on her. She'd also learned from Fugaku that he was the child Minato Namikaze and Kushina Uzumaki and she'd then known that the Fourth hokage would never have wanted to make Naruto, his own son into a monster. With this realization it was much easier to get close to him.

Now as she set the baked goods in the kitchen, she could hear Sasuke excitedly showing Naruto the back yard. She chuckled to herself as she watched from the window as Sasuke gently towed Naruto this way and that the blonde remaining ever so quiet. It had been the way he was on the day they got back from the hospital. She sighed in sadness as she remembered.

Naruto who'd used to be a go lucky happy kid whenever he wasn't plagued by those accursed stares of hatred had also been loud and obnoxious. However, after his incident and the discovery of his blindness, the little five year old boy had become an introvert too scared to do anything alone for fear of being attacked. He'd become quiet and shy and just allowed Sasuke to take him wherever the raven

haired five year old wanted to go. Pretty much Naruto had come to trust Sasuke with his life since he'd saved him from being beaten to death.

Uruchi smiled again and finished what she was doing then she left the house, heading back to her bakery. Meanwhile, Sasuke was showing Naruto the small pond surrounded by rocks.

"This is our pond and it's really pretty," Sasuke explained. "Now be careful and don't fall in because it's still deep and if you don't know how to swim you'll drown." Naruto nodded, reaching his hand out and gently placing his hand on the surface of the water. After they were done with the back yard, Sasuke began showing him around the whole Uchiha district. By this time, the word of Naruto's adoption had spread around the whole compound.

"I still don't know what Fugaku was thinking," whispered a male in front a shop. "Adopting that thing into the family!"

"I know but we'll have to go with it because he's now protected by the head of the family," stated another. The whispers continued as Sasuke and Naruto ran about, paying no heed to the despisers. Soon, after another corner, Sasuke accidentally ran into someone's leg causing both Naruto and Sasuke to fall on their behinds.

"Hey, what theâ€¦" the voice said and Naruto cringed thinking they were in trouble because of him. However, the man who'd spoken only smiled and crouched down.

"Well now, aren't we in a hurry?" the voice teased. Sasuke recognized him right away.

"Shisui!" he exclaimed excitedly then he turned to Naruto. "Naruto it's Itachi's best friend Shisui. Don't worry he's really nice!"

"I see," stated Shisui Uchiha. "So you must be Naruto the newest member of the family is that right?" he chuckled then reached forth and ruffled Naruto's spiky blonde hair. Naruto gave a faint smile. "I've heard a lot about you Naruto. I hope you'll like it here with us."

"Yeahâ€¦m-me too," Naruto responded shyly. Shisui smiled and took up one of Naruto's hand's placing it on his own cheek.

"Here," he stated. "I already know that you can't see any more so we can get to know each other by texture. This is my face you're feeling right now."

"O-okay," Naruto stuttered. He ran his hands carefully around Shisui's face feeling every cheek bone, eyebrow and eye. He felt awkward having to feel around someone else's face but it was all he had to get a good image in his head to imagine what someone would look like. Shisui chuckled at the boy's shyness.

"So are you two going to take a break for lunch any time soon?" he wondered. Naruto didn't even know what time it was.

"Umâ€¦" he started.

"Oh yeah, it's almost time for that isn't it?" Sasuke exclaimed. He

then turned to Naruto. "So Naruto what would you like to eat?" Naruto blushed feeling embarrassed with the decision for lunch now on his shoulders. He turned away somewhat and began digging his big toe into the ground.

"Umâ€¦Iâ€¦umâ€¦I like ramenâ€¦if that's okay," he stammered. Shisui chuckled.

"Well then, since I don't have anything better to do today, why don't I take you guys to Ichiraku's ramen hut? I know it's the best in town."

"It is!" Naruto said suddenly then he back tracked from his statement going red in the face. "I mean, I usually always eat there when I'm by myself and the old man's nice to me and everythingâ€¦"

"Then it's decided," Sasuke declared. "To Ichiraku's ramen!" Then he began pulling Naruto along at the same pace they'd already established with Shisui making up the rear. They walked for a while and seemed confusing to Naruto as usually he would be able to tell where he was going with sight and he'd get there faster. But with every step it seemed to take forever and once again he internally growled at not being able to see anything. Finally they arrived at the shop and stepped inside. Sasuke helped Naruto up on a stool and suddenly a familiar cheery voice sounded nearby.

"Ah, Naruto," exclaimed Teuchi, the ramen shop owner and best maker of ramen ever. "I haven't seen you in a while. How've things been going?" Naruto wasn't quite sure on how to respond but nevertheless he found a way and was more open.

"It'sâ€¦been really great I guess," he said. "I mean, I have a new family now so it's good." Teuchi's eyes widened in surprise and he smiled big.

"Oh I see, so someone's adopted you have they? Which family?" Sasuke suddenly piped up.

"My family!" he exclaimed and Teuchi became even more shocked as he recognized the youngest of the head of the Uchiha clan sitting in front of him.

"You mean you were adopted by the Uchiha clan?" he said incredulously. "That's quite a surprise. I never thought they'd do something like that."

"Aww, it was nothing," Sasuke chimed. Shisui chuckled.

"Believe it or not, Sasuke's mother and Father fought the council for the right without caving in," Shisui complimented. He reached out his hand to ruffle Sasuke's hair. "And Sasuke here save Naruto from a bunch of drunkards on his last birthday from what hear."

"Is that so?" Teuchi stated impressed. "Well that's mighty brave of you Sasuke." Sasuke chuckled and scratched the back of his head.

"Thanks," he replied sheepishly. Suddenly a young woman came out of the back of the shop in a hurry.

"Hold it," she stated. "What do you mean saved from a bunch of drunkards? What happened to Naruto?" she demanded. They all except Naruto of course looked up in surprise. Ayame, Teuchi's granddaughter, was standing with an over worried look on her face. Shisui tried to make it sound not as bad as it had been.

"Well on his birthday last week, some drunk men thought they'd chase and catch him but it kind of got out of hand because they had kunai even though they were mere citizens. Sasuke just so happened to be going home with his mother when he noticed to he went to Naruto's aid. Afterwards, my aunt was annoyed and decided to adopt him so he wouldn't be attacked again." However, the kinder version didn't change Ayame's mood.

"Damn those idiots and fools, attacking a kid like that and on his birthday too. It makes me sick! Why I oughta head down to whatever cell they're being held in and smack them silly until they were black and blue. There's just no excuse to cause a child so much hurt." Shisui smiled at her.

"I couldn't agree more but don't worry, those men won't be causing any more problems from now on. Sasuke may have stepped in to help but so did my Aunt and Itachi. I can only imagine the scare they got when the ANBU showed up with Itachi in the lead."

"They'd better not," Ayame threatened bringing up a strainer she'd been working with. "Otherwise I'll be the one to knock em straight the next time. I don't care if they're all men." Shisui chuckled and Sasuke slightly cringed as at the moment, Ayame reminded him of his own mother's scariness whenever certain rules were broken or people were being hurt. Teuchi meanwhile sighed and chuckled.

"Well as long as our Naruto is doing alright now, I'm glad. In fact, I think I'll let your first bowls be on the house!" Shisui raised an eyebrow.

"Are you sure old man? I have the money to pay." Teuchi put up a hand to wave away the offer.

"Not to worry. After what happened I can't very well charge you. Besides, Naruto missed his fifth birthday ramen special so this will more than make up for it." Naruto blushed.

"Th-thanks old man," he stuttered.

"Alright," Shisui agreed. "Thank you. If it's not too much I'd like to try your newest seafood based ramen please." Shisui bowed in thanks. Teuchi laughed lightly.

"Sure no problem. I assume it's the super special for you, right Naruto?" Naruto blushed.

"Um, yes please," he replied. Teuchi then turned to Sasuke with a smile.

"And what about you young man, eh what would you like?" Sasuke contorted his face into one of thought.

"Wellâ€¦I don't really like anything too sweet and tomatoes are my favouriteâ€¦" Teuchi chuckled.

"Well then, why don't I see what I can do then? I'll whip you up something to your liking and you can taste it to see if you like it. Who knows, we could create a new flavor." Sasuke's eyes widened.

"You can do that?" he asked amazed.

"Heh, sure. Part of the fun of working in the food business is coming up with new recipes and flavors people might like. You just sit back and wait. I'll come up with something that'll knock your sock off." Sasuke beamed and became excited knowing that he'd be able to help in making a new flavor of ramen that might one day become famous.

The two cooks got to work preparing the dishes and the three hungry guests waited patiently making some small talk all the while. Finally, three piping hot orders of ramen were placed in front of the three. Naruto's was piled high with the good stuff of the special order from pork to shrimp and veggies and Shisui's was filled with various seafood's. Sasuke's had Tomatoes in it with an assortment of some other vegetables that would spice up the flavor and once the noodles passed his mouth, he was impressed.

"Mmmm," Sasuke moaned indicating he liked his. Teuchi chuckled. After a while the sounds of slurping ramen could be heard from the guests except Naruto. Ayame gave him a questioning glance.

"Naruto, why aren't you eating yours yet? You're usually halfway done by now," she said causing Naruto to blush.

"Well Iâ€¦"

"Oh wait, I've got it," Sasuke declared as he reached over and separated Naruto's chop sticks for him and then carefully placed them in the blonde's hand. Teuchi and Ayame seemed to be curious.

"Why couldn't you do that yourself?" wondered Ayame. Naruto shied away again, blushing redder in embarrassment.

"Well Iâ€¦I meanâ€¦Iâ€¦"

"He can't," Sasuke helped out. Ayame raised an eyebrow and her grandfather did the same. "Those mean men who beat him up scratched up his eyes with a kunai or chakra blade or something my brother mentioned. He can't see anymore." Ayame's hands flew to her mouth in shock. Teuchi remained somewhat impassive.

"I see," he said turning around. "Well then Naruto just take your time then. There's no rush." Naruto nodded still slightly embarrassed.

"Oh you poor boy," Ayame said. Naruto looked down, not seeing anything, his cheeks burning red.

"Ayame," Teuchi scolded. "Don't you go making him feel bad about it okay?" Ayame shrunk away from her grandfather's gaze.

"Yes, of course." She then went back to work. Naruto meanwhile had finally brought his head up again and started to feel around carefully for the bowl. As his left hand felt the side of it, he

brought it up to grip it better. Then he did the same with his chopsticks hand and felt around until they clinked against the bowl. He then brought them up and proceeded to lower them into the broth. He leaned forward and, with the practice of doing it many times before he'd lost his eyes, he began to pick up the noodles and carefully brought them towards his mouth.

As he ate slowly, he marveled at how much better it tasted as he savored every bite since he wasn't focused on seeing it. He had hit his cheek a few times and drew the attention of almost every customer and Teuchi and his granddaughter. Shisui and Sasuke only gave him glances to make sure he wasn't having any trouble. When he was finally done he said shyly,

"Th-thank you." Teuchi smiled.

"No problem. Would you like another bowl?" he asked. Naruto shook his head finding for the first time that one heaped with everything was enough. Perhaps without eyesight, newer possibilities were opened to one when they no longer relied on their eyes. Shisui and Sasuke gave their thanks as well having finished ahead of Naruto and then they all walked out into the sunny street, with Sasuke leading the way for Naruto.

They went to many different shops that before would've had Naruto thrown out of but instead now since he was with the Uchiha and word travelled fast, he was allowed in with Sasuke and Shisui beside him. However, despite not being able to see, Naruto could still feel the glares of hatred and contempt directed towards him and it made him shy away more from people in the street when they stopped to see if the rumors were true. Sasuke noticed this of course and took up the duty of turning his own glare back and holding onto Naruto's hand tighter so nothing would happen to him.

They spent the rest of the day just walking around the different districts and checking things out and when the sun was just setting, Shisui took them to a playground near the river and just a few blocks away from the compound. Naruto had fun as Sasuke invented a new game for them to play where Sasuke would make a sound or bang on the play equipment and Naruto would have to guess which direction he was hiding. It took a while to get used to but eventually the two boys were having fun and Naruto for the first time in a while was laughing.

Finally it was time to head home and both boys were exhausted. Shisui couldn't help but smile and marvel at their already strengthening relationship. As they were walking home, Naruto suddenly collapsed on his knees. Shisui turned about slightly worried something or someone had happened to the little blonde. But Shisui only sighed in relief as he saw Naruto was only tired and hadn't been able to continue walking. He now sat in the middle of the road rubbing his deadpan eyes and yawning.

"It seems someone's mighty tired," said a voice as a figure appeared. Shisui grinned knowing who it was despite him wearing an ANBU mask.

"Hello and how was your day Itatchi?" Shisui questioned. Itatchi rolled his eyes at his friend and took off his mask and put it away behind him.

"Big brother," Sasuke exclaimed. He'd begun rubbing his eyes too. "Are you done early today?" Itatchi turned to his younger brother and smiled.

"Yes, they decided there was nothing more for anyone to do so my entire squad was let off early. And it looks like I arrived here just in time. You two look about ready to collapse although one's already gotten that part down." Shisui chuckled with his friend as Sasuke rubbed his eyes and yawned.

"No way, I'm not tired. I can still walk," he protested. Itatchi merely rolled his eyes again. Meanwhile Shisui approached Naruto, who'd begun to nod off some and hefted him up onto his back where the blonde felt for his shoulder and rested his head there, closing his eyelids. Shisui then looked to Itatchi.

"Shall we?" he said with a goofy smile on his face. Itatchi too kept smiling as he lifted Sasuke up onto his back.

"Yeah, let's go home," he stated. Sasuke squirmed some.

"Big brotherâ€¦I said I could walk," complained the younger Uchiha.

"It's alright Sasuke," Itatchi assured. "You just worry about conserving some energy for dinner alright? You look like you've had long day so don't be stubborn." Sasuke looked about ready to protest but his body wanted nothing more than to rest so he just did as his brother suggested and placed a cheek on one of Itatchi's shoulders and shut his own eyes.

"Fineâ€¦you win," he said. The two older Uchiha's took the boys upon their backs, back to the compound. There, they let them nap a short while, while Mikoto prepared the dinner. She hummed to herself and Itachi helped by setting the table. Fugaku sat reading a paper at the table and all was quiet.

"Three years!" he suddenly stated calling Mikoto's and Itatchi's attention.

"Huh, what was that dear?" she asked curiously. Fugaku sighed and folded his paper.

"I mean there are three years left until both Naruto and Sasuke will be old enough to join the academy. The problem isâ€¦what are we going to do about Naruto?"

"Oh, I hadn't even thought of that," exclaimed Mikoto. "You don't think they'll use his blindness as an excuse to not accept him do you?" she asked worriedly. Itatchi scoffed as he peeled potatoes for the stew.

"Even if a ninja is blind, he can see all around him. He just needs some training is all," he stated matter of factly. "In factâ€¦I don't think it would hurt much if we started training Sasuke too, if only a little before the academy. There's no law saying they can't learn something from their own family now is there and the Hyuga clan practices the gentle fist technique at a young age. I hear Hiashi Hyuga is already beginning to train his first born daughter." Fugaku

closed his eyes in concentration.

"I suppose you're right on that point," Fugaku stated. "However, ever since Naruto's adoption, many clan members have been planning to use him as a weapon. They've been trying to convince me to stage a coup d'État of the village and use the nine tails jinchuuriki as a main force. I swear, the absurdness of this clan sometimes." He shook his head whilst pinching the bridge of his nose.

"You told them off didn't you?" Mikoto wondered slightly disturbed by the news. Fugaku opened his eyes to look at his wife with a stern gaze.

"Of course I did Mikoto. I'm not about to turn Minato's and Kushina's last legacy into a human weapon. In fact I wish to avoid any coup as much as possible, to come to an understanding with the council like civilized people. And Itachi, I'm going to need your help in this." Itachi turned to face his father who was once again pinching the bridge of his nose in thought with his eyes closed.

"What did you have in mind father?" Itatchi questioned. Fugaku opened his eyes yet again.

"We'll talk about it later after dinner in my study. Also, if you could bring Shisui as well that would be appreciated." Itachi raised an eyebrow.

"But why just Shisui and me?" he wondered. Fugaku held his eldest son in his hard gaze.

"Because I know that you two would do most anything to defend the hidden leaf village and I know that you're the only other Uchiha in this clan who won't betray me. Also, I want Naruto and Sasuke left out of the loop alright? They're only children so they don't need to know about all of the crap that's about to happen. Let's keep their innocence as long as we can." Itachi nodded.

"Very well, if that's what you wish father then I'll bring Shisui over tonight after dinner." Fugaku nodded.

"Good, now go see about getting the boys up for dinner," Mikoto stated. "I'll just put those potatoes in and finish up alright?" Itatchi nodded. Then he placed down the last potato he'd been working on and headed into the room where Sasuke and Naruto were resting from their long day. He crept over and began to nudge them. Sasuke woke up first, slow and groggy.

"Big brother?" he asked. "What gives? Isn't it night time?" he yawned some.

"Well not quite," Itatchi smiled. "It's almost time for dinner and I thought you two would want to eat something before you called it a night." Sasuke yawned again rubbing his eyes.

"Alright," he replied. Then he turned to Naruto and started gently shaking him until Naruto moaned out,

"What is it Sasuke?"

"It's dinnertime sleepyhead. Wake up so we can eat." Naruto then

slowly sat up and began rubbing his own eyes despite them not being able to see anything. Then after a while, Sasuke led Naruto into the kitchen where the stew was finally finished and being placed on the table. Sasuke led Naruto to an extra futon cushion that'd been dragged up and they sat together on the same side of the little table. Mikoto, seeing that Naruto was still somewhat sleepy, helped him eat his fill as Sasuke slowly ate his. If anything at all, the warm stew only made them more tired.

Finally, at the end of it all, Naruto fell back asleep at the table and Sasuke began rubbing his eyes again, as he tried to stop himself from nodding off. It was Itachi who helped them with his mother to the bathroom to brush their teeth then finally put them back to bed. Afterwards Itachi set out to find Shisui and bring him to the secret meeting between them and Fugaku. And as events began to unfold, both Naruto and Sasuke slept soundly now newly made brothers and completely unaware of the coming struggles of their future.

"Training?" questioned Naruto uncertainly as he stood beside Sasuke on a clear training ground which Fugaku had requested for the day.

"That's right," Fugaku clarified as he stood before the boys. On either side of him was Shisui or Itachi who also stood fairly poised and ready. Fugaku had awoken the boys early and had brought them along with Itachi and Shisui to the training field that more oft than not was reserved for the Konoha police force which he headed. Having made his announcement both boys gave different reactions. Sasuke was brimming; excited his father was giving him some attention for once and Naruto—well—he was shying away and trying to hide behind Sasuke, afraid of the prospect of fighting without sight. He was more frightened than intrigued. Fugaku cleared his throat.

"I want you both to become as strong as you can be and in order to do that you'll have to start training early, especially you Naruto." Naruto flinched. "During your sessions, you'll either be taught by Itachi, Shisui or I until we deem you worthy of passing our tests. Each one will be difficult but if you stick with it and never give up then you'll pass. Of course we're only slightly preparing you for the Academy which is coming up fast in the next few years and if you both want to do well, you'll study hard and work your butts off, understood?" Sasuke gave a boyish giggle and saluted.

"Yes sir!" he replied enthusiastically. Naruto cringed again behind Sasuke calling the raven hair's attention. "Hey Naruto—what's wrong?" he asked curiously.

"But I—I can't see? I can't become a ninja if I can't see," he stammered. Fugaku sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. However before he could say anything, Shisui came up to Naruto and placed a comforting hand on the boy's shoulder and though Naruto couldn't see it, he could sense the elder was smiling at him sincerely.

"That's the point of training," he stated simply. "We're going to help you to see Naruto through your other senses. If you can become a good enough sensory type ninja then you won't need to worry about having no sight when it comes to your eyes. A shinobi must be able to utilize and use every one of his senses but most people who know how to see are handicapped sometimes because their eyes present a problem

with them not being able to properly utilize other senses. So if we can train your other senses and your chakra molding abilities then you should stand a better chance at graduating the academy in a few years and becoming a ninja." Naruto seemed to brighten up a bit with this explanation.

"Do you really think I can?" he asked nervously. Sasuke brought a hand down on his brother's back and pulled him into a headlock. He smirked.

"Of course you can silly," he stated with a chuckle. With father's and big brother's help along with Shisui's we'll both become really cool and strong ninja someday. Just wait for it, you'll seeâ€|well so to speak." Naruto nodded, smiling shyly.

"Sure, okay. I'll give a try," he said. Sasuke beamed and turned to his father.

"See, now we're ready father. When're we gonna get started?" Fugaku chuckled to himself as Itachi stepped forward.

"Right now," he stated. "Now at first, we're going to take things slow but you'll have to grin and bear it even if it proves boring. In order to start, we'll begin with meditation and feeling for chakra within our own bodies. You'll be doing this with father and me whenever father isn't around. Then when it's time for combat training, I will also train you in that alongside of Shisui. Now any questions?" Sasuke's hand shot up into the air immediately.

"So what's meditation got to do with training anyway?" he half asked half whined. Itachi sighed.

"It's meant to help you understand and better control your chakra and this is important if you're planning to become a ninja as every ninja must learn it. Chakra after all is key to unlocking and learning new jutsus. You'll learn this no doubt in the academy when you go."

"That and meditation is good for the body, mind and spirit," Fugaku interjected. "It teaches the ninja patience and most importantly how to conserve energy. All in all it is important if you wish to learn anything at all and Sasukeâ€|if you wish for me to teach you the fireball jutsu then you'll have to pass meditation first. I won't teach you if you don't prove you can learn anything first." Sasuke lowered his head as his father scolded him and Naruto listened on intently. Fugaku then cleared his throat.

"Now, before we begin meditation every morning we'll begin with some exercise. First up is a jog around the training field and Naruto don't worryâ€|we'll be on standby to make sure you don't get hurt." Naruto gulped. Meanwhile, Fugaku made a line in the dirt in front of him then sat down, looking back up at the boys afterwards. "Alright, this line is your end point. Sasuke, don't be babying Naruto the entire way he needs to learn how to do this things by himself. The only help he'll receive is from Shisui or Itachi, understand?"

"Butâ€|" Sasuke tried to protest but was abruptly cut off by his father.

"Understand?" Fugaku pressed. Sasuke hung his head.

"Yes sir!" he replied. Naruto meanwhile was sweating profusely, the new fear of having to run the perimeter of the training field by himself scaring him worse now than the prospect of training. Meanwhile, Fugaku sat back on his knees on a futon cushion in the grass and closed his eyes.

"Good! Now when you're done, you may join me in meditation. Now begin!" With that the two boys began to run, Naruto more slow paced and tentative than Sasuke who would always keep looking back worriedly to see how his brother was doing at the start. However, Shisui and Itachi were there to make sure they stayed focused. Itachi appeared beside his younger brother.

"Sasuke, don't concern yourself with Naruto, he's our responsibility. Just keep running and no looking back."

"But what if he gets hurt?" he wondered. Just as he said this, the blind Naruto a little ways behind him ran into his first tree as they'd entered the forest. Sasuke's eyes widened with panic as he watched Naruto stop and hold his face with his hands, already beginning to blubber.

"Sasuke!" Itachi barked in his ANBU voice causing Sasuke to flinch. "Like I said, Naruto is mine and Shisui's responsibility. You just focus on running to the goal like father told you. As for Naruto, he's meant to run into things; that's just the way it is. If he doesn't then he'll never learn and won't be able to move forward. It will hurt at first but soon, he'll become strong. Just have faith that he'll pull through."

Sasuke wanted to protest but somehow he felt his brother was right. But at the same time in his heart he also felt he was wrong. Of course he knew that Naruto couldn't be babied forever, somehow, someday he'd have to grow up and stand on his own two feet. But he knew that if he just outright abandoned him then he'd never get the support he needed. Sasuke couldn't quite figure out his conflicting feelings and he himself almost ran into a tree but pulled out at the last second and skimmed by it just getting a slight wood burn on his arm. Itachi remained beside him as he looked back once more.

This time Naruto was still running but with Shisui beside him explaining probably the same thing to him as Itachi had just explained to Sasuke himself. It was this time that Sasuke saw him that he saw something new about Naruto. Instead of breaking down and simply crying about being treed in the face, he was fighting back the tears of pain and with Shisui's words flowing through his ears and into his head, he seemed more determined. Slowly as he kept running, Naruto was slowly breaking away at his shell and even though his eyes were dead, Sasuke could've sworn he could see a fire burning in them, one that would never waver.

With newfound confidence for his brother, Sasuke turned about again and then decided to give Naruto the only support he really needed. He shouted at the top of his lungs.

"Come on, you can do it Naruto!" he all but screamed as he picked up speed and started to run at a steadier pace. Little though did Sasuke expect to be answered.

"And you can do it too Sasuke!" shouted the little voice of Naruto from behind. "We both can ya know!" Sasuke at first was stunned until Itachi spoke up beside him with a slight chuckle.

"See, as long as you both believe in yourselves and one anotherâ€|you'll be able to become worthy shinobi someday!" With those words added onto Naruto's, Sasuke felt a surge of power he'd never felt before, a warm feeling spreading all throughout his body. He grinned a goofy grin as he leapt up into the air and shouted again.

"Yeah!" And with that kept running. Both boys continued their morning jog with new vigor and determination for the training to come even if it was filled with hours of meditation. Once they finished, Sasuke coming in first of course, they began their meditation session with Fugaku. When Naruto had come in he was covered from head to toe in scrapes, cuts, bruises and splinters. But nonetheless, the two sat on either side of Fugaku and meditated, all the while listening to some of his lessons on balance and life.

This process continued for the next few months which slowly began to take on more training during the day. The boys eventually started combat training with Itachi and Shisui and though Sasuke held a natural talent for speed and precision, Naruto more than made up for it with his strength and unpredictability. Soon they also began to learn how to mold their chakras and send it to separate parts of their bodies. Of course for Naruto this was much more complicated with the fox being inside of him without his knowledge but nevertheless, they both made progress within the three years they had until the academy.

As for Naruto, thanks to his sessions with Fugaku, Itachi and Shisui whenever he needed private training, he eventually became accustomed to sensing chakra all around him whenever he placed a foot down on the ground. He was able to turn it into a sort of rebound reverberation where he would send his chakra into the ground and it would bounce back to him once it hit something. It became his way of seeing things without the use of his eyes. However, it was still a work in progress so whenever he was near chakra signatures he couldn't recognize, Sasuke would still be able to act as his eyes. Things continued on like this until the first day of school.

Naruto could sense the sun coming through the window of the room he shared with Sasuke. As a natural reaction, he was the first one up again. He quietly got out of bed but once his feet touched the ground he felt wobbly enough that he fell back hard on his bed causing Sasuke to stir beside him. The raven haired boy sat up and yawned looking towards Naruto with a questioning glance.

"Hey, what's up? Why are you up so early Naruto?" Naruto blushed looking kind of sheepish as he scratched his head nervously.

"Wellâ€|today's supposed to be our first day at the academy andâ€|I guess I'm still kind of nervous." Sasuke tilted his head with curiosity then got out of bed whilst throwing his covers to one side and walked over to the dresser where his clothes were kept.

"Aww, c'mon!" he said as he pulled open a drawer and pulled out a

short sleeved black t-shirt. "What's there to be nervous about? Everything's gonna be fine. Even if we don't have all the same classes together, we can still eat lunch together and I'll be there to watch your back in case of bullies. Just let me know if anybody's picking on ya K?" Naruto gave a weak smile.

"Yeah, okay," he replied as Sasuke having finished changing shirts was already working on pulling up some gray shorts that went down to his knees. When he was finished, he closed the drawer with his foot then made his way over towards a separate dresser that held different clothes inside. He opened one drawer and fished around.

"Besides," he continued. "Itachi and Shisui said it's never good to worry about stuff like that otherwise you'll do bad when it counts so just relax. Do what mom says and look up at the positives instead of the negatives and you'll be fine." With that, Sasuke finished fishing through the drawers of the second dresser and Naruto looked down with his dead eyes and began playing with his feet.

"I could've gotten my own clothes," he mumbled. Sasuke closed he drawers of the dresser and turned around.

"Yeah, yeah, so sue me," Sasuke replied sarcastically. "Here!" he called as he tossed the folded clothes casually through the air and Naruto caught them in one swift movement. Sasuke smirked.

"Heh, you're getting better at that," he stated. Naruto smiled softly still aiming his dead eyes at his feet.

"Thanks," he replied bashfully. Then he slowly yet quickly got himself dressed for the day, taking the time to fold his pajamas and make his bed, placing his favourite night cap on his bed post. Then he made his way over to the door of the room, already memorizing where it was from living in the house for three years now. In fact, he could now adequately walk the house without tripping anymore as he knew where everything was and Mikoto, his adoptive mother had made it clear that everything should stay the way it was for his sake.

The two entered into the kitchen where Mikoto Uchiha was already up n' aтем making breakfast and humming to herself. As they entered the room, she glanced over her shoulder and called out.

"Good morning boys! Are you ready for your first day at the academy?" she asked enthusiastically. Sasuke was the first to answer as he kneeled down at the breakfast table.

"You bet!" Meanwhile, Naruto, still feeling slightly uneasy just kneeled down carefully next to Sasuke.

"Yeah, I guess so," he replied tentatively. Mikoto cocked an eyebrow as she turned back to making breakfast.

"You don't sound like you're feeling ready," Mikoto noted. "Anything that's bothering you Naruto? You know you can tell me about anything." As she finished with making breakfast, she turned with the now full plates towards her two sons and placed them on the table.

"He's just nervous cuz he thinks he'll get beat up or made fun of because of his blindness," Sasuke stated as he reached for some

chopsticks and broke them apart. "And because he thinks the teachers will be too hard on him and he won't be able to find his way around the school and because he thinks the teachers are gonna drop some ridiculously hard pop quiz on the first day," Sasuke went on listing the many reasons Naruto had come up with over the past week during their training sessions with Shisui. Mikoto laughed lightly.

"Oh is that it? Well Naruto, I doubt they'll give you a pop quiz on your first day," she sat down on her side near the table. Naruto looked down with his dead eyes at the table feeling slightly embarrassed.

"Yeah butâ€¦if they hate me like everybody else doesâ€¦" he muttered under his breath thinking of those who still scorned him and hated him despite his being adopted into one of the most powerful clans in the leaf village. Suddenly he felt his hair being ruffled playfully by a larger yet rough skinned hand.

"Don't you worry about a thing," Fugaku spoke up from behind him. "Itachi, Shisui and I have given you lessons that will help you deal with any bullies and if any of your teachers give you a hard time in class, you just let me know about and I'll handle it myself. Oh and don't forget, the third will be in the same building as you and if he sees any shenanigans while making his daily runs, he'll put a stop to it himself. Plus you have Sasuke who'll be there all day." Mikoto smiled up at her husband who usually never used to wear a smile in his life until Naruto joined the family. She then looked back at Naruto who was now listening intently.

"He's right Naruto," she stated. "Against all of those would be bullies, you've got us and the third hokage if you get into trouble. So don't worry even if you have a rough first day, we'll be here waiting for you when you get back. And besides, I've already decidedâ€¦tonight we'll go out to Teuchi's place for ramen alright? To celebrate your entering the academy." Naruto brightened up at that and then reached for his chopsticks too, breaking them apart.

"Alright thenâ€¦" he said with slightly more enthusiasm. "I'll just do my best and make you proud." And with that he began slowly yet quickly eating his breakfast eggs which had been prepared for him. Mikoto smiled and ruffled his hair with her own hand.

"There now, that's the spirit. Just don't let anything get you down and it won't be possible to have a bad day." Naruto nodded as he ate. Fugaku then sat down beside his two sons and Mikoto grabbed him a plate and placed it in front of her husband.

"Thank you!" he said as he picked up his own chopsticks to eat. "Now boys, I've got a little bit of time before the morning meeting at the police station so I'll have just enough time to walk you to the academy." The boys looked up at Fugaku with surprised looks as it was rare that their father would take them anywhere unless it had something to do with their training.

"You mean it?" asked Sasuke excitedly. "You're really gonna take us? Butâ€¦you're usually so busy." Fugaku scoffed.

"I'm never too busy for my sons. If I were then I wouldn't make a good parent. Now just finish up your breakfast and finish getting

ready. We'll go in a few minutes." The boys nodded and hastened their pace so that they didn't keep the Uchiha leader waiting.

As soon as they were finished, they got up excusing themselves from the table and placing their dishes into the sink. Then they grabbed their bags and began to go to the front door.

"Ahem!" Mikoto cleared her throat calling the boys to attention. They turned around to face her. She held up two paper brown bags and crinkled them in her hand. "Forgetting something important?" she teased. The two blushed and returned for their lunches saying thank you as they were received then turned back and went to wait by the door.

Soon Fugaku was there too, dressed and ready with his sandals on and waving Mikoto goodbye with the boys beside him. Then they began walking through the Uchiha district towards the main road that would take them to the academy. Along the way, Uruchi noticed them from the doorway of the bakery and called out a greeting.

"Good morning Fugaku, Sasuke; Naruto!" They turned to wave back.

"Morning Auntie!" the boys called in unison. Uruchi then looked around and came forward, broom in hand as she'd been sweeping.

"So then are you off to your first day at the academy?" she asked excitedly. Sasuke beamed up at her and Naruto gave his signature shy boy smile.

"Yeah that's right!" Sasuke boasted proudly. "Someday we're gonna be ninjas!"

"Yeah, if we graduate," Naruto added. Sasuke gave him annoyed look then brushed it off.

"Ah, details, details! I'm not worried one bit!" he stated boldly. Uruchi laughed as Fugaku sighed at his son's naivety.

"Well then if you're so confident," said her husband as he stepped out of the shop carrying something. Once he stood in front of them, he gave them a warm smile. "It's better to be insured so hereâ€¦I have some of my specially made dumplings as a good luck charm." Uruchi widened her eyes at her husband in disbelief.

"Teyaki!" she exclaimed. "You'd better hope that Mikoto doesn't find out you've been handing them sugar again. And what gives, Fugaku's right there!" Teyaki reached back and scratched the back of his head nervously.

"Oh sorryâ€¦I forgot for a second," he replied sheepishly. The boys who very much wanted the delicacies turned towards Fugaku who raised an eyebrow at their pleading faces. Fugaku raised a finger and scratched the side of his face, glancing sideways.

"I suppose I could let it slip since we are in a hurry. Just don't tell your mother and she won't find out." The boys smiled up at him then turned towards Teyaki who threw his head back and laughed.

"Well thenâ€¦in that case. Hand me your lunch bags and I'll put them in so you can be on your way. You don't wanna be late now do ya?" He gave another boisterous laugh as they gave him their lunch bags and he let slide in two separate containers with treats inside. After receiving the sweets, they turned and waved goodbye as they and Fugaku continued on their way.

"See ya," called Teyaki after them.

"Do your best and have a good first day!" cried Uruchi.

Soon the bakery was out of sight and a little after that they were out of the Uchiha district and walking down the street towards the academy. Along the way, Naruto could hear the hustle and bustle of the wakening populace of the village and Sasuke could see many other parents and siblings walking other kids their age and slightly older to the ninja academy. As he got closer he kept getting excited as Naruto kept getting more and more nervous. Despite all of the encouragement he'd received from his adoptive family, Naruto knew there were too many variables that could make the day go downhill at any time. His greatest fear of all was being separated from his brother Sasuke.

Sooner than later like Naruto wanted, they found themselves at the entrance of the academy's schoolyard. There were already a bunch of parents there with their children all excited to start their first days like Sasuke was. Fugaku noticed Naruto's unease at the gate and sighed wondering if the boy would ever relax. Meanwhile, Sasuke was trying to get a good look of everything. The three stood by the gate for a while before two curious little girls came over to them.

"Hey, I never thought they'd let you into the academy," the blond one said to Naruto. Naruto turned towards the voice and cringed some at the words. However, the girl hadn't meant them to be rude or mocking, just curious as her parents had always told her to avoid him before. But the little rebel she was becoming behind their backs would compel her otherwise. Fugaku who'd heard looked down at the blond.

"And what do you mean by that little one?" he asked almost dangerously. The pale blond haired girl cringed and turned away, her face turning bright red.

"Nothing, I was just curious. Mom and Dad keep saying he's bad news but I just don't get it. They kept saying he shouldn't be let into the academy or at least my mom was." Fugaku became amused and knelt down beside the girl.

"Well then maybe you should be the judge of whether he's bad or not yourself," he suggested lightly, lifting his tone some. "After all, you never really know someone until you get to know them am I right?" The girl blushed again but turned back and smiled nodding.

"Yeah, I guess my parents have always told me that too. You're right mister." She looked towards Naruto then, smiling and waving. Naruto however didn't react which kind of ticked her off. "Hey you!" she snapped. "I'm waving at you. Aren't you gonna say hi or what your name is?"

"Leave him alone!" said the irritated voice of Sasuke as he came back to join them again. The girl with pale blond hair turned and blushed

red as she saw the newcomer and the girl behind her who had pink hair tied back in a red bow became fixated on him with curiosity. The light haired blond however quickly recovered, not entirely liking the black haired boy's attitude.

"Oh yeah and why should I?" she shot back. "I waved at him and he ignored me. I have every right to be cross."

"He didn't ignore you, he can't see dummy!" Sasuke retorted. A smack to the back of his head caused Sasuke to hold his new sore spot and turn to face the stern face of his father.

"Sasuke watch your mouth! I won't have you calling names. Now apologize," he ordered. Sasuke's eyes widened in shock.

"Butâ€¦" he tried to protest.

"No buts!" he father interrupted. Sasuke's face flushed red as he turned to face the girl, fidgeting and looking down at his feet.

"Sorry," he muttered under his breath. This only boosted the blonde's ego as she smiled.

"That's okay, I forgive you," she replied with a sense of superiority. Meanwhile, the rosette behind her was peeking out curiously now at Naruto who was digging around in the dirt with his foot. She tilted her head and wondered why her parents had ever told her to stay away when he looked so innocent.

"Excuse me," she spoke up with a small yet curious voice. Naruto, suspecting he was being spoken to, looked up. The rosette continued. "How come you can't see?" Fugaku, Sasuke and Naruto were all taken aback by the question. Fugaku thought of the best way to answer and finally cleared his throat.

"Wellâ€¦"

"Someone cut my eyes when I was little," Naruto said bluntly. The light haired blonde's expression changed to shock.

"Cut your eyes? Who?" she demanded to know. Naruto shied away some but still answered her question.

"Well um, some people who didn't really like me attacked me on my one of my birthdays and one of them cut them with a kunai he had."

"Oh, that sounds awful," spoke the shy rosette girl from behind the blonde girl.

"That must've been scary," the blonde added. Once again Naruto shied away from the girls, turning some so he wasn't facing them directly.

"Well actuallyâ€¦" he started. "I'm actually kind of glad," he said shocking everyone present to hear.

"What, how could you be glad about something like that?" the blonde girl asked amazed. "Something like that would make anybody else cry." Naruto dug his foot into the dirt again blushing.

"Well not for me," he replied. "Crying kind of hurts my eyes more. But the reason why I'm glad is because before that night, I was all alone and then when they were attacking me, Sasuke came to save me and then his mom and dad took me in and I had a family so I wasn't alone anymore so I don't mind being blind because I know I don't have to see to know I finally belong somewhere." With his final words, Fugaku smiled at his adopted blonde haired son. Meanwhile the girls just stared at him in shock. Finally the blonde haired one smile while blushing.

"You know" she started, speaking to Naruto and playing with the dirt around her own foot. "You're kinda cute." At this, poor little Naruto began blushing so bad he began to look like a tomato. He turned away quickly to hide his face behind Sasuke.

"What's your name?" inquired the rosette. Naruto continued hiding, causing Sasuke to give him a curious look.

"Um it's it's it's Naruto," Naruto Stuttered through Sasuke's shirt. "Naruto Uzumaki." Sasuke furrowed his brow.

"Hey, what's the matter?" he asked of his brother. "You're suddenly shaking like a leaf." Fugaku meanwhile chuckled as he recognized this form of attention as being crushed on. He reached forward and gently ruffled his hair.

"It's alright Naruto," he said. "She's just complimenting you so you don't have to hide." He slowly coaxed the blind blond from behind Sasuke and slipped his bigger hand over his smaller one, the two hands naturally lacing together.

"Th-ank you," Naruto continued stuttering bashfully as he thanked the girl for her compliment like he'd been taught to do by Mikoto. The girl blushed some more before clearing her throat some.

"Well anyways, my name is Ino Yamanaka," the girl said proudly. "And if we're in the same class together, I want to sit by you!" she declared. Naruto's blush worsened as this time he hid behind Fugaku's arm. Sasuke watched his brother and chuckled lightly. Then his eyes fell on the pink haired girl just standing and staring. Sasuke furrowed his brow at her.

"So hey you!" he called out to the rosette. She turned surprised she was being addressed and blushed slightly as she saw who was addressing her.

"Y-yes?" she stammered. Sasuke held her in his more than curious gaze.

"So do you have a name or what?" he asked. The rosette blushed and quickly turned away.

"Um well my name is S-Sakura." She stated. "Sakura Haruno." At this Sasuke's look softened and he smiled at her while he put his hands behind his head.

"Cool, my name's Sasuke Uchiha," he replied giving a big grin. Sakura blushed again and started turning the same shade of red as

Naruto.

"N-nice to meet you," she stammered. Sasuke frowned then.

"Geez, what's with everybody stammering and stuttering today?" Fugaku chuckled nearby and turned to his son.

"Well Sasuke, today is your first day. I bet there a lot of kids here who are just as nervous with meeting new faces but don't worry; things will get into full swing within a month or so as people get to know one another. It's alright to be a little shy." Sasuke blinked then shrugged his shoulders.

"Yeah, okay," he replied. Suddenly the bell for the academy went off and all heads turned towards the front of the building where the Hokage himself stood. A jonin beside him raised his hand and then his voice.

"Alright could all new students please come to the front entrance please? The rest of you, if you have a class you should be in I suggest you get there right away before you're marked tardy. And parents, we please ask you to stand at the back if you're planning on staying for the opening ceremonies. Thank you for your cooperation." As soon as he finished saying all of that, the parents surrounding them began to move as they said goodbye to their children on their first day of school and sent them to stand in front of the hokage. Fugaku turned to his two sons.

"Alright, that's your cue to get going. I'll be taking pictures in the back for your mother so behave yourselves." The boys nodded. Then he turned to the girls. "You two should probably go and find your parents and wish them well before you go and stand with the others." They nodded.

"Alright, we will," Ino replied taking hold of Sakura's hand and turning to drag her back to their parents. As they went, Ino looked back over her shoulder and waved at both Sasuke and Naruto though Naruto didn't see it. "It was great meeting you two. Hope we're in the same class together!" she called one final time before her and Sakura disappeared within the sea of parents and kids.

Sasuke turned to his brother and took his hand. He smiled warmly as he began leading him towards the front.

"C'mon Naruto, we'd better get going," he stated. Naruto just nodded and let himself be led through the crowd to the front of the line where the third Hokage stood in all his glory. Sasuke chose a free spot and stopped, letting Naruto stop right beside him. Then the man who'd spoken before spoke up again not too soon after.

"Alright, and now the third Hokage is going to address the students," he declared as he stepped back from center stage and the Hokage stepped forth. He cleared his throat and gazed out into the sea of new and young faces surrounding him.

"Good morning to all of you. Today is a very big day as you are now entering into the ninja academy for the first time. I will not lie to you in saying it'll be an easy road as no road in life has ever been easy and coming to this school will place new challenges in front of you to face. There will be bumps and falls along the way butâ€¦if you

can stick with it, do your best and show what you are made of then I have no doubt in my mind that you will become worthy ninja someday. But until then it's up to you to listen to your teachers, learn and apply your newfound knowledge as best you can until that day that you graduate. So thenâ€¦let's begin a new journey together and open the doors and windows of opportunity ahead! That is all!" with that, the third Hokage bowed to the new students and let a female teacher with glasses and curly hair, take his place.

Meanwhile, people had begun clapping after the Hokage's speech and Naruto couldn't help but feel inspired. He wondered how a man like that could've possibly gained such a title and the respect of every villager in the leaf. Then he began wondering what it'd be like to be in the Hokage's shoes, to be respected and revered for what he could do and the way he would protect those people. Suddenly Naruto came to a conclusion and turned to Sasuke.

"Hey Sasuke," he started. Sasuke turned to his brother.

"Yeah?" he questioned.

"I thinkâ€¦I think I wanna try and become Hokage someday." Sasuke's eyes widened with shock.

"Huh, why would you wanna do that?" Naruto looked down with his dead eyes.

"Wellâ€¦he's respected by everybody in the village and he's a pretty amazing guy soâ€¦maybe if I become Hokage someday then maybe people will look up to me instead of looking down ya know. I mean, if I show the village I'm not a menaceâ€¦maybe they'll start to like me instead of hate me." Naruto began playing with the dirt at his feet again as Sasuke held him in his gaze. He then gave his brother a warm smile and turned back to the stage, tightening his grip slightly on Naruto's hand.

"Well then if that's what you wantâ€¦" he started, "Then I guess I'll just have to help you get there." Naruto's dead eyes widened with surprise.

"Youâ€¦you really mean that Sasuke?" Sasuke scoffed.

"Sureâ€¦I mean after allâ€¦I am your brother aren't I?" Naruto stared towards his brother's voice with an innocent look that soon turned into an innocent smile.

"Yeah; thanks Sasuke," he said. Sasuke smiled too then laughed lightly.

"Yeah alright! Well, first thing's first. We've gotta pass the academy and make it to Genin first. So let's give it our all!" Still smiling, Naruto turned his head towards the stage.

"Right, let's do it together." And with that they waited in the crowd of kids until the woman now up front finished sorting the students into their homeroom classrooms. Needless to say, Naruto and Sasuke were put into different homerooms in their first year. However, despite feeling fearful, Naruto's first year in that class wasn't all that bad as he'd thought, minus the calculating and cold stares of some of the students and the teacher that is. And ironically, Ino

Yamanaka ended up sitting beside him after all.

It was the second month of their time at the academy and Naruto and Sasuke only ever got to see one another in the morning at home, at lunch at school and finally after school as Mikoto Itachi, Shisui or sometimes Fugaku would walk them back home.

It was a bright and sunny day today as Naruto stood at the edge of the schoolyard at the beginning of lunch. He was all alone and he looked frantically around with his ears and his chakra sensory trick to see if he could pinpoint Sasuke who was running late today. The boys would usually meet at the entrance to the academy where Naruto had learned to walk to on his own in the last month and then they would find somewhere to eat lunch together. However, as Sasuke hadn't shown up yet, Naruto began to worry about what had happened. Suddenly he heard laughter nearby and looked up.

"Hey what's the matter freak?" sneered one of his daily bullies, Kosaka. His friends behind him laughed some.

"Good afternoon," Naruto replied. He always tried to be polite to the boys but they didn't like it as they thought he was trying to be stuck up. One of them stepped forward and pushed Naruto back some, Naruto giving out a tiny yelp of surprise.

"What's that? Do you think you're better than us or something brat? Cuz I can tell ya now we don't want your greetings or sentiment. In fact since your so called brother isn't here, I guess I'll finally be able to teach you a lesson." He brought his fist back and Naruto sensing the motion cringed, frightened that he was about to get hurt.

"Hey, what do you think you're doing?!" called a stern voice from behind Naruto coming into the entryway. The boys froze. "Kosaka, you're supposed to be in detention right now. I suggest you get moving before I give you another one for tomorrow." Iruka Umino stood behind Naruto and the boys, arms crossed. He was definitely not pleased.

"Humph, this is not over," Kosaka growled at Naruto. He released Naruto's shirt collar and proceeded to walk back inside. Meanwhile, Iruka eyed the other boys surrounding Naruto.

"And what about you boys?" he questioned threateningly. "Should I give you one for causing trouble or will you go and have your lunch somewhere else?" The boys seemed to hesitate but eventually they just dispersed and went elsewhere. Iruka sighed.

"Geez, what am I gonna do with those boys?" he questioned himself. Then his eyes fell on Naruto and a warm smile reached his face. Most people hated Naruto and that usually rubbed off on their children but Iruka knew why. It was hard to believe that a boy this frail would be strong enough to hold back the nine tails but unlike the others who would throw dirty glances and hatred his direction, Iruka could tell the difference between a beast and a child. He reached out and ruffled Naruto's hair.

"Sorry about that Naruto," he apologized. "But it's a good thing I got here when I did right? Why don't you go find somewhere safe to have your lunch okay?" Naruto only shook his head.

"Okay butâ€¦after Sasuke gets here. We always eat together," he spoke shyly. Iruka smiled.

"Alright then, just try to stay away from trouble okay?" He walked off back into the school. Naruto continued waiting for Sasuke. He kept trying to listen for his footfalls. Suddenly he felt something bump into him from behind and before he knew it, he was falling towards the ground.

"Oof!" he exclaimed as he landed. Something was on top of him but it didn't make a sound until it quickly got up.

"Ah, I'mâ€¦I'mâ€¦I'm very s-sorry. I wasn't looking w-where I was going and I-I tripped so suddenly Iâ€¦" it was a girl's voice. Naruto thought he recognized it but he wasn't sure. He began to feel his way to his feet.

"Umâ€¦it's okayâ€¦it was only an accident," he reasoned with her.

"Uh, y-yeahâ€¦I-I guess so." She stammered. There was a long awkward silence that followed as the girl with tinted blue hair began to fidget uncontrollably. She was also turning the colour scarlet.

"W-well I uhâ€¦.better go have my lunch before break is over," she said quickly. Naruto nodded.

"Yeahâ€¦okay," he replied almost sadly. The girl hesitated before she went.

"Don't you have to eat your lunch too?" she wondered. Naruto blushed and turned away.

"Well uhâ€¦ya seeâ€¦my brother and I normally eat together so I'm just waiting for him."

"Ohâ€¦what's your brother's name?"

"Sasuke," he replied.

"Sasuke!" the girl said shocked. "You mean Sasuke Uchiha isâ€¦isâ€¦is your brother?" Naruto blushed more.

"Well yeah. We might not be related by blood butâ€¦we're still brothers." The girl burned a brighter red as she tried to piece together her next words.

"Well umâ€¦I-Iâ€¦I don't know how to say this butâ€¦umâ€¦wellâ€¦Sasuke is my class and wellâ€¦he uh got in a fight with someone and so nowâ€¦they both have detention during lunch. I-I'm sorry butâ€¦Sasuke's not allowed out today." Naruto hung his head.

"Ohâ€¦wellâ€¦okay then," he said sadly. He kicked a stone near his foot that he'd sensed and looked down. The girl fidgeted some, feeling bad she'd dropped the bombshell like that.

"S-sorry," she repeated. There was another pause but then she got an

idea. "You knowâ€¦if you wantâ€¦umâ€¦maybeâ€¦maybe I-I I, could eat lunch with you. Of course you don't have to if you don't want too," she added quickly. Naruto looked up some.

"You really mean it?" he asked surprised. "You'd really eat your lunch with me?" The girl turned away from his stare.

"O-of course. I meanâ€¦no one wants to eat alone r-right?" She continued to fidget. Naruto smiled brightly.

"Okay, thanks. I'd like that," he replied with his own tinted red cheeks. The girl blushed more but smiled.

"O-okay thenâ€¦Iâ€¦I know a spot where we can eat in peace. C-Coming?" she asked as she began to walk away. She turned back when she realized he hadn't moved to follow her. "W-what's the matter?" Naruto blushed completely red and turned away from the direction of her voice where her eyes would also be.

"Um wellâ€¦ya seeâ€¦I'm kind ofâ€¦blind. I can't really see where I'm going sometimes and sensing new things right away is hard. I can still barely make it around the school without holding onto a wall." The girl smiled again and her blush calmed some so that her face didn't look like a tomato.

"Wellâ€¦would you like it i-if Iâ€¦umâ€¦maybeâ€¦held your hand while we walk?" Naruto nodded shyly. The shy girl then walked up and gently took his hand. Then she turned, reddening some more in the face as she began to lead Naruto towards one her personal favourite lunching places.

"Soâ€¦what's your name?" Naruto asked her. She smiled as she continued to lead him.

"M-my name isâ€¦H-Hinata H-Hyuga," she replied. Naruto smiled.

"My name is Narutoâ€¦Uzumaki and Uchiha." And the girl led him to a tree in the school yard with a lone swing hanging off the branch. No one else was there so she helped Naruto sit on the swing beside her as it was big enough for two small children.

They spent the rest of the lunch break getting to know one another and eventually, by the time the school bell rang, they'd managed to become friends and they walked back inside the school, hand in hand.

End
file.